rec'd 3/7/67 december 25, 1966

dear Gene:

Thank you so very much for your Christmas greeting, delivered to me yesterday by hand when Gene Brandt arrived to spend the holiday (?) season here with me! It is now 6:45 and the day has been a most unusual and beautiful one, especially weather-wise, for tho' it is cold, the skies have been clear since morning and to see so much blue covering this old city is a rare and uplifting experience. We went to the Abbey for 10:30 service and sat in the choir, and as the sun moved, each stall, newly gilded for the 900th anniversary, came alive and the blue and gilt designs on columns and organ case, the red-shades on the choir-stall candles, the lead colored organ pipes, the truly angelic, scrubbed and combed appearance of the ruffed choir-boys in their red-wool cassocks, not to mention the wonderful sound of the organ played by Simon Preston and the full choir in Swedwick's "Hodie Christus natus est" conducted by Douglas Guest, and the always lovely Christmas hymns, made a complete and soul-satisfying joyous start to our day. I have so much to be grateful and thankful for and even the weather of this one special Christmas, the first I have ever known in 57 years when I was not in my own local church, and the first in 20 years away from Riverside, seemed to bloom and arrange itself to cheer me + encourage me. Yesterday, Anna and I travelled to Cambridge to hear the Candlelight Carols at Kings College Chapel. It was a rainy, bitterly cold day and because of the thousands going "home" for Christmas, we had to stand the entire trip, but we had a delightful meal at the old Bell Hotel, roast beef and Christmas pudding, before the service and it was just the antidote to the day's weather. David Wilcocks, the organist had sent me 2 tickets to the Carte Chapel, through the kind graces of Alec Leyton of St. John the Divine, so we did not have to stand in line to get in, at least. It was packed to the walls, of course, and heated by candles! I was most moved by the first sound of the little boy soprano soloist, who sang without any organ or choir, the first verse of "Once in royal David's city", followed by the 2nd + 3rd verses a capella by the King's choir. The heavy darkness of the chapel by 3:00 P.M. + the few candles on one side of the screen created an indescribable moment in time. As the service proceeded, by 4:00 it was too dark to see the program and I became more and more isolated in my thoughts, so I really believe I got more from the Abbey this morning than from the carol service. We stayed after the service yesterday to tea and I had a chance to get a few photos (being a cross American) of the solo boy + a few of his colleagues,

and of Wilcocks, so maybe I can have a "clean" sometime for you and Sunny. I doubt very much if you remember, or if you knew, but my first time ever to be in this Chapel was in 1938 when Virgil played an afternoon recital there, with the same lighted candles and semi-darkened windows + fan-vaulting, so you know how my mind turned inward as I lost contact with the service! Well, enough of that.

I have been thinking much about you since coming over here, wanting to write you, and I am appreciative of your warmth towards me in asking the why and wherefore. It is a long and troublesome tale, but if your eyes can stand this scrawl, I will tell it. Being a finisher, I am sure you have deciphered many manuscripts, tho.

I had, what I considered, one of the best vacations I have enjoyed in many years. I bought myself my first car, a Mustang, and had as companion Mrs. Maude Taylor, from the church, and we covered 12,500 miles of the West and Canada, seeing Banff + Lake Louise + Jasper, the red-wood country, and Glaciers, Ranier, Crater, + so forth. I returned excited to go back to work and I found my apartment a welcome haven after two years of uncertainty about it and some unhappiness in 3 rooms after 2 acres of land and a big and beautiful horse. As always, the choir deteriorates over the vacation period and I must replace singers and it has come to the place where women can not be secured at 2.50, 3.50, 5.00, and altos even at $7.50, so I take what I can get and teach them voice, repertoire, ensemble, musicianship and drive them + everyone else crazy. By November I felt I had a unit going and was taking things easier, but Willard Jaeger has hounded me over many years about men + women being paid the same, his being a voice teacher makes it also difficult for him + for me, + other personality problems. It seems he wrote a letter to the Music Com. demanding equal pay, choir organization, a representative on the committee, and demanded to know who had chosen the alto and tenor soloists. At the music committee meeting which considered this, I tried to explain once again why we could no longer get singers, why I had to "teach" at choir rehearsals, how difficult it was to have Bob Price leave but understandably why, etc. I think that Gene Laubach decided I was ill, so he told Jim and Carroll Tilsh I was nearing a nervous breakdown. I can only guess about this, for I was continuing the normal patterns of choir rehearsals into Nov., holding one on the Sunday afternoon of Nov. 5 before Fred played his recital, and following it on Tues. night of Nov. 8 with a rehearsal for "Dona Nobis Pacem". After the re-

rehearsal, Anna Brandt handed me a note she had picked up at the Associates desk, from Carroll Filah asking if I could meet with him & Irene the next morning. I quite naturally was unnerved and Anna unintentionally increased my anxiety by her attempt to ease my mind. It seems that she had talked with Irene on Sunday afternoon after Fred's recital and he asked her how I was. For several weeks I had been bleeding from the rectum & I was getting a little concerned & found it also exhausting, so I had gone up to tell Fred I hoped his recital would go well but I had to go home to bed. Irene said "Oh, so you're sneaking out" and I explained I was not too well at the moment. So all, Wednesday morning at 11:00 I met Carroll, Irene, & Fritz Fuhler in Irene's office & he told me there was a generous sum of money earmarked for one Richard Beagly and no one else for an 8 month leave of absence. I at once, in my usual negative way, concluded I was being eased out and surely didn't take this easily. Carroll was a tower of strength and the 2 of them tried their best to convince me and I suppose I finally left with some degree of mental peace. It was spelled out pretty clearly, tho, that they thought I was on the verge of a breakdown and if they could catch it now it would be easier than afterwards. It is not easy to be told you are mentally and emotionally on the edge of a precipice, and that you are being sent abroad to see a psychiatrist. Yes, I was instructed (!) that Jim wanted me to come here and they would select & arrange for me to see a doctor. They proceeded to contact Dr. Cotton at St. Luke's (who does not know me nor has he ever seen me) and a psychiatrist at Pres. Hosp., and both doctors recommended Dr. Wm. Sargent, who is head of St. Thomas' Hosp. here and England's leading psychiatrist. Irene said I was to leave at once but I refused to go before I had conducted the AM & PM services on Nov. 12. I have never felt such pressure but I was determined I would do "Dona Nobis" if I was fired! Without that following 10 days I dismissed by 25 pupils, closed my apartment, tried to decide what to bring, had two physicals with Don Hoskins, one of our deacons who Jesse Lyons recommended. He was stunned, as I was, at the speed & finality with which all this was arranged & said I should have been under a doctor's care before they ever began. He placed me on heavy sedation at once and kept me on it until I left N.Y. and 4 days after I arrived here, on Sat. Nov. 26, I had my first appointment with Dr. Sargent. He showed me the letter from Dr. Cotton which said I was irritable, emotional, depressed over my mother's recent illness and death, & depressed over the loss of a 34 year

association with Virgil. He questioned me about my work + when I explained that women get a pound or a little more, for 4 hours work, the program carried the general financial setup, that after 20 years I got about $6800.00 a year and taught 25-30 hours a week to make a living he was appalled + said I was due for a breakdown + must rest. He placed me on 2-3 Perstelin pills a day and 4-6 Seconal at night, + I now can sleep till 7 or 8 and it used to end at 3:00 or 3:30. I have seen him twice only since then and he is completely baffled as why I am here and has written Dr. Cotton:- who made the decision, why was it made, what were the circumstances that caused the decision. These two sessions lasted less than 15 min. each and he talked mostly about himself - he had refused a $30,000.00 offer to go to Cincinnati, what a fine old house the Eng. Speaking Union is, the fine homes on Berkeley Square around the corner, all now mostly offices, how he is completely sold on socialized medicine for he comes from a very wealthy family + was always ashamed as a boy to ride around in luxury when such poverty existed, how he had TB 7 years ago, used the first 6 mo. to rest + the 2nd 6 months to write a best-seller "Battle for the Mind". If you could get a copy (paperback Pan-Piper) I believe you would find it fascinating. He told me last time I could go home now as far as he was concerned, but I said NO, that they had sent me and I was going to use it to the full! He insists I relax, rest, + enjoy myself "for you will never get another one". I walk about 4-5 miles a day, am reading a lot + resting regulary every afternoon. I have been to a concert or a play every night since arriving so that I do not remain in my hotel room all the time. The rain and cold and gloom do not encourage me very much but I am trying to see the positive side and great opportunity Jim has given me. He wants me to stay here indefinitely + then go to Nice to be with another doctor, but Dr. Sargent does not want me to go to another doctor + especially to Nice where there is no one, so once again I am disturbed as just what I am supposed to be doing and what others want for me. I had made plans to leave here Jan. 11, but Jim wrote me again that he + the other ministers and lay people felt I should stay near Dr. Sargent + that's what they had sent me for, to be restored (?) to health + to come back to Riverside strengthened. What do I do when Dr. Sargent says I don't need him? He says the medicine I am on, + he has prescribed it for the next 6 months, will do what I need and I can see him again in June before I leave for home. To whom do I listen, where do I turn, what is it that Jim + Dene + Carroll want of me?

I am to see him again on Jan 3 and he wants to talk to Anna, to get more information if he can. He has already written Dr. Colton & showed me the copy, asking for information. Because of Jim's letter, I have changed my flight to Munich from Jan. 11 to the 20th, and I AM GOING! I plan to stay there 4 weeks and go to Vienna for 4 (about the 17th of Feb.) so I would be in Vienna until about the 17th of March & it would be sheer joy to see you & Sunny there. I hope to be in Rome for Easter. Jim thinks I plan to travel and I will come home physically & emotionally exhausted (he says). And I am sure that he visualizes this psychotherapy as it is done in N.Y.C. but Dr. Sargent is no "couch" doctor & says he is not in the popular vein of America, yet Jim says I should do what the doctor says. My plans to stay in one place for a month and a 2nd place for a month surely is not "travel", but explaining by mail seems to be useless. I have spent hours and pages writing to him and get no where, so perhaps Anna can report and enlighten him somehow, or Dr. Sargent can.

Carroll was wonderful and tried to be most helpful. I am getting my full salary, and any loss of income from teaching is covered, plus the entire cost of the trip over here, so I assume I am not fired. It would have been cheaper to pay me a year's salary & get rid of me, if I am so unstable. I must hang on to this hope, for I have only 7 more years and I love Riverside & my work with a consuming passion. Without it I may as well die, and tho' I have not met all the desires and hopes of the clergy & congregation, I have given all I have and I believe a dedication no money could buy. No man ever had the opportunity I have had here and I want so much to be worthy of it and to make the music worthy of the beauty & vision behind it all. I drive myself and everyone else, but not for personal gain or glory and I will try to do what they want if only someone will tell me what it is!

Anna is the nearest & dearest thing I have, but I still can not see my way to follow your suggestion, & she is willing to sacrifice herself for me, for what companionship I can offer. So — my selfishness or doubt or hope still rules the roost.

Forgive my long-windedness, but I feel so close to you and your myself out as tho' you could digest and accept the whole sorry mess. Write me if we CAN meet!

Love to you & Sunny,

Dick